

# **School Board Trying to Sabotage their own Resolution!!! And Student training for Jobs!!! And Shut-up Danny Blanton!!! Report by Robert A. Williams**

A recent article in the Shelby Star noted that School Board member Danny Blanton has been very successful in advocating for a change in state law to synchronize the Cleveland Community College and Cleveland County Schools calendar to allow full use of educational time for a number of high school students to take vocational courses at Cleveland Community College. The Star correctly credited Blanton with shepherding resolutions through the school board (9-0) in favor), Commissioners, the CCC BoTs, and various other city councils, and even the Sheriff's Department for direct delivery to the NC General Assembly in Raleigh. House Bill 79 passed 100-10 in favor of allowing this synchronization. The Senate Bill is still being deliberated and will have to pass before the Bill becomes law.

What the Star did NOT report was that certain School Board members are secretly trying to sabotage this change in the law to allow school calendar flexibility that they unanimously voted for as a Resolution. Obviously in an effort to disgrace Danny Blanton if the Senate Bill fails. In this effort it is alleged that School board member Phillip "Bully" Glover, in an egregious example of deceit as he had seconded Danny Blanton's motion to approve the school calendar flexibility Resolution, goes to the Boiling Springs City Council meeting and chides them for signing on to Danny Blanton's sponsored resolution.

Glover allegedly told the Boiling Springs Town Council that if CCS wanted them to sign on to the resolution, the CCS Superintendent and School Board Chairman would have asked them to do so. Also, as I have previously reported, the School Board had some words inserted into the Final Resolution draft that was offensive to the NC General Assembly and might possibly cause problems getting the Bill passed in the NC Senate. Although the NC House saw through the School Board's "side-ways" deceit, the NC Senate might still take offense and refuse to pass the bill. I hope not.

There are other things the Star did NOT report. Such as:

1. The differences in calendar schedules between CCS and CCC loses 30 days per year of instruction time. What about all these Dual enrollment programs that CCS and CCC brags about. If a student misses 30 days of class, not counting any sick time, how do they make good grades?? The answer is, they can't unless the classes are "dumbed-down." Thank you, Danny Blanton, for figuring this out. Proving the "dumbed-down" reports CCS and CCC have been denying for years. Even firing those staff members that bring it up. Commissioners, it's high time you make CCS and CCC fix this problem.

2. The Edge Factor is a mis-named workforce development scheme rolled out by CCS at the last school board meeting. It concentrates on Pizza Parties and video games as ways to match trained students with high paying jobs. Only thing is, CCS is not producing trained students and Cleveland County does NOT have enough high paying jobs as related to how many students graduate every year. That is one of the reasons about 50% of working Cleveland County residents drive out of Cleveland County every day for their paycheck.

3. The Edge Factor as noted above was touted as CCS's answer to workforce development, yet School Board Member Danny Blanton was appointed by the Commissioners to the Region C Workforce Development task force and reported he had never

even heard of this Edge Factor stuff until it was rolled out at the last school board meeting. So much for CCS working together with anybody else in this well-known and long-term problem. I watched this Edge Factor roll-out myself and was immediately struck with just how dumb it was. And doomed to failure from the very start. Commissioners Doug Bridges and Deb Hardin were also present for this roll-out. I am sure they had to reach the same conclusion that I did. This is just another failed program from a failed school board. Like Speaker 4 said at this very same meeting, "when a school board refuses to implement the policies and laws they swore to enforce, they can be removed." Commissioners, it is time to remove some school board members. Eight school board members to be precise. All but Danny Blanton.

Folks, it is time to admit that the Cleveland County School Board have failed to provide adequate leadership to ensure our children are properly educated. Almost half are graduated every year without being proficient in Reading and math. Which is the basis for proper training for a productive and self-sustaining life in this day and time. Basically, the School Board has set up half our students for failure, which, if justice would be done, is a capital crime.

Consider this.

1. Education and workforce development start in the first grade with basic reading, writing and arithmetic. Grammar, etc.
2. Learning is based on what you learn today being the basis for what you learn tomorrow. Repetition and progression. This continues through the grades whether the student will go on to college or learn a trade. History, Civics, etc. is mixed in as they go.
3. Starting in the 6th or 7th grade students are exposed to skills related to living a productive life after High School. Making change for a \$20 , balancing a checkbook, learning the value of work and money.

4. Around the 9th grade simple and basic vocational skills are taught to all students. Such as sewing a button on a shirt. Fixing a leaky faucet. Using basic hand tools to fix things around the house and on the job.

5. Basic vocational training is advanced from the 9th grade through graduation such as to allow those who will be working a trade after graduation have all the skills and knowledge to start their trade jobs at the beginner level.

6. Advanced vocational, technical and college level training should begin with CCC or other Community Colleges or regular colleges.

If I can figure out this basic education plan in just the several minutes it took me to write this down, why does the Cleveland County School Board and CCS Administration just not get-it?

One reason is obvious. The school board is just ate-up with the obsession of shutting-up Danny Blanton. As well as "serving" on the School Board as only a status symbol and not providing any leadership or direction to the staff. It is time for the School Board to find problems and fix them. If they can't or won't find and fix problems, it is time to get rid of every single one of them that refuse to do their jobs. By resignation or removal. It doesn't matter which.

Commissioners, it is time to task County Attorney Tim Moore with finding ways for you to remove the dead wood from the school board AND the bloated school high level administration. Take over CCS just like you did with the DSS and soon to be the Health Department. Sooner rather than later. Commissioners, remember the Golden Rule. The person with the gold makes the rules. You collect the gold (tax dollars) so make some rules with accountability that will clean up the mess at CCS and elsewhere. Otherwise, CCS will continue its death spiral of poor performance that will doom our students to a lifetime on Food Stamps and unemployment. Or crime. CCS has had plenty of time to improve educational processes, yet

for all their “going forward” statements, they are heading in exactly the wrong direction. And it shows.

And what it shows is bad news all around.

- An ageing collection of High Schools with unequal facilities that are all over 50 years old with no strategic plan for replacement. Or even plans to fund replacements.
- “Close the gap” programs everywhere, yet no gaps are ever closed. Indeed, more gaps are developing.
- A CCS workforce development program that is going backwards.
- Graduating students who just can’t wait to get out of Cleveland County.
- Drugs, mental violence (such as girls cutting their wrists as a cult ritual) and bullying.
- Half the graduating students can’t read or write proficiently.
- A school board and administration that won’t follow state law, much less their own policies.
- Nepotism, cronyism and sexual misconduct between CCS staff members as well as staff and students that is covered-up with wild abandon.
- Phony audits where the auditors are instructed to audit selected areas that are preselected and prescreened so nothing wrong will be found.
- Investigations that are “fixed” so that nothing wrong will be found.
- The State Department of Public Instructions goes along with all this CCS deception because they have gone along for so long that they are themselves a big part of the problem as well as a big part of the cover-up.

So, what is left to do??? The Cleveland County Commissioners must step up and take control. Fix the many problems at CCS and elsewhere. Involve the general public and not just the circle of vultures flying around with a sharp eye on making a profit for themselves, not on helping students get that good education us taxpayers are paying for but the students are not

receiving.

Commissioners, this is what the citizens of Cleveland County are expecting you to do. Don't let us down!!!.